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2011 Purple Heart Remembrance Ceremony

Iowa will honor their recipients of the Purple Heart at a remembrance ceremony to be held Friday, August 5th 2011, beginning at 2:00 p.m. at the Gold Star Museum, located at Camp Dodge in Johnston, Iowa.

The ceremony will include special guest speaker, Lowell Lein, MOPH Chapter 1979, who will present and donate his book, "Purple Heart Day" – a tribute to Iowa's wounded and injured veterans of the Military of the Purple Heart – to the museum.

Lowell was also instrumental, along with his Iowa legislator, in drafting the legislation that led to the proclamation of August 7th as Purple Heart Day in Iowa. A resolution observing August 7th of each year as Purple Heart Day was passed during the 2011 Legislative Session establishing the date and encouraging all governmental bodies in the state to observe the day in a manner that honors the sacrifice of those men and women who shed their blood and gave their lives in service to the United States of America.

August 7th was selected because on that day in 1782, General George Washington created the "Badge for Military Merit," a purple, heart-shaped piece of silk, edged with silver binding. The badge was presented to soldiers for "any singularly meritorious action."

On the bicentennial of Washington's birth, February 22, 1932, the U.S. War Department announced the creation of the "Order of the Purple Heart." The Purple Heart now displays a bust of Washington and his coat of arms.

Because August 7th falls on a Sunday this year, the ceremony will take place on the 5th. Open tours at the museum will also be held on August 5th. For additional information about the ceremony, contact Sherrie Colbert, Director, Gold Star Museum, 515-727-3211.

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